

congressional district of Virginia where the Chesapeake Bay meets the James, Nansemond, and Elizabeth Rivers. This location presents both challenges and opportunities. My district is home to the Port of Virginia, one of the largest and busiest ports on the eastern seaboard. With 95 percent of our nation's trade moving by water, it is essential that the port is able to maintain operations.

Unfortunately, due to sea level rise, both attributable to climate change as well as historic subsidence, these same waterways also pose a serious risk. State and local elected officials in Virginia already appreciate the significant threat sea level rise poses to Hampton Roads. Unfortunately, the cost to proactively and aggressively address this problem head-on is far too great for any city to bear by itself. While Hampton Roads has already spent considerable sums of money to address the rising water and implement resilient infrastructure where feasible, the scope of the entire project to actually address the problem is expected to total in the billions of dollars.

Hampton Roads is also home to significant traffic backups throughout the region, especially at waterway crossings. The widening of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel is primarily being financed with local and state revenue from sales and gasoline taxes in the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund but it requires federal support. There are limits to how these major transportation projects can move forward without federal assistance. For example, the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels, connecting the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, were in such a state of disrepair and need of expansion that the Commonwealth had few options other than to enter into a lopsided private-public partnership leading to egregious tolls for decades to come. The Hampton Roads region is also in vital need of public transit investments. Our airports, roads, and bridges are in need of repair and I would urge the committee to commit crucial federal support for infrastructure in every state.

This infrastructure bill includes much needed investments in a cleaner and greener infrastructure. This bill targets investments that will improve energy efficiency and resilience and grow local economies without passing the burden onto local communities.

I am pleased that this bill will also directly impact my district by dedicating nearly \$24 million in critically needed infrastructure funds, so that we can invest in the future of our communities. With these funds the Birthplace of America Trail can expand in Newport News; the City of Chesapeake can begin a pilot program for electric emergency response vehicles; Hampton Roads Transit can move forward with the Bus Rapid Transit project making traveling around Hampton Roads without a car easier; Tidewater Drive, a major arterial road connecting to Naval Station Norfolk, can be repaired; and work on the Craney Island Access Road, which will help keep up with the increased import/export demands at the Port of Virginia, can advance.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes necessary investments that will create good-paying jobs and resilient infrastructure as we face the rising seas and changing climate.

## INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 30, 2021*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the following individual staff of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for all their hard work on this important piece of legislation. I'd also like to thank the team at the Office of Legislative Counsel for their assistance in drafting the legislation and the many amendments offered during our Committee Markup and on the House Floor.

### HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

Helena Zyblikewycz  
Jackie Schmitz  
Garret Gee  
Brittany Lundberg  
Chris Bell  
Zan Guendert

### RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Auke Mahar-Piersma  
Andrea Wohleber  
Frances Bourne  
Katherine Ambrose

### WATER RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Ryan Seiger  
Navis Bermudez  
Alexa Williams  
Michael Bauman

### FULL COMMITTEE

Kathy Dedrick  
Jill Harrelson  
Alice Koethe  
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Matt Leasure  
Michael Hudspeth

### INTERNS

Bethany Abbate  
Mateo Alliende  
Henry Lininger

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Karen Anderson  
Robert Casturo  
Jordyn Coad  
Kakuti Lin

## RECOGNIZING COLONEL WILLIAM C. BENTLEY III

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 1, 2021*

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize those men and women who have served this great Nation with honor—men such as Colonel William C. Bentley III, United States Marine Corps.

Colonel Bentley's long and distinguished career began after graduating from The Citadel and commissioning through the Platoon Leaders Class. From there, a fruitful career as a USMC Helicopter Pilot blossomed. During this career, Colonel Bentley was stationed and deployed across the globe—from Djibouti to Iraq to Europe, Colonel Bentley has seen it all.

In his final command, Colonel Bentley led Marine Corps Installations National Capital

Region-Marine Corps Base Quantico. In this role, I've had the pleasure of witnessing firsthand his passion for the USMC mission. He has assisted me, my staff, and the citizens of Virginia in navigating complex issues with an attention to detail that every public servant should work to emulate.

Colonel Bentley's work ethic, duty to mission, and commitment to servant leadership are without equal. I believe that his personal drive to achieve excellence in his work has and will set a very high standard for his peers. I would also like to thank Colonel Bentley for the service and sacrifice he has made, both for our Nation and our Marine Corps. His impeccable integrity, boundless work ethic, and loyal devotion to duty earned him the respect and admiration of myself, my staff, and the First District of Virginia. In retirement, I have no doubt that Colonel Bentley will continue to serve the Nation honorably and with distinction in whatever path he chooses to pursue.

I wish William and his family the best of luck as they continue their journey together. It was an honor and a pleasure having William serve at Marine Corps Base Quantico. We all can sleep soundly at night knowing that members of our all-volunteer force like William stand ready to defend our country and take the fight to our enemies, far away from their families and the comforts of the United States of America.

I thank Colonel William C. Bentley III, as he has done a fantastic job. Best of luck to him and may God bless him and his family as he moves into this next chapter.

## HONORING JAMIE MATHIAS

**HON. TOM McCLINTOCK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 1, 2021*

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of one of our great local educators, Jamie Mathias, a Social Sciences teacher within Del Oro High School for 22 years. Jamie's singular goal for students was to encourage each one to better themselves; be that in the classroom or through athletics. Jamie always pushed students to reach their next level and become the person he knew they could be.

Jamie was a father figure, a coach, and a mentor to many students during his time as an educator. His academic impact on our community will be felt for a very long time. The young minds he molded and inspired that are now spread across our county are the living legacy of what a great teacher will leave behind.

Most importantly, Jamie was a family man, devoted to his family and raising his children to be exceptional members of our community. They carry with them the many life lessons that Jamie imparted over the years. My deepest condolences and prayers go out to the Mathias family, especially to his wife and children. I thank Jamie, for his extraordinary impact in our schools, and the countless students he encouraged.